GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:194
ANSWERED ON:12.03.2007
DAMAGE OF POTATO CROP DUE TO DISEASE
Murmu Shri Hemlal

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether potato crop has been damaged due to blight despite use of T.P.S. seeds in some States particularly in Bihar; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) & (b): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) AND (b) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 194 DUE FOR REPLY ON 12TH MARCH, 2007.

(a): No, Sir. The Government of Bihar has reported that `True Potato Seed` (TPS) potato crop was free from late blight of potato in Bihar. However, the incidence of late blight of potato has been reported in susceptible varieties in the districts of Purnea and Katihar, of Bihar State. There were also reports of incidence of late blight of potato in certain pockets, in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka and Maharashtra with damage varying from 15 to 50% during November, 2006 on susceptible varieties of potato.

(b): In Bihar, Potato crop of about 7,000 acres in Katihar and 4,800 acres in Purnea districts have been damaged by late blight of potato. The incidence of the disease is mainly due to favourable climatic conditions and use of seed tubers without proper seed treatment. The problem has been aggravated because of use of susceptible varieties and congenial environment especially ligh showers, low night temperature and foggy weather. Government of Bihar got the area surveyed through the scientists of Rajendra Agricultural University, Pusa, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Purnea and Katihar, Central Potato Research Station, Patna and officials of National Horticulture Mission in December, 2006. The team has recommended a number of mitigation measures, inter alia, harvesting the crop of more than 60 days old for table purposes, preventing the use of infected tubers for raising the next crop, spraying of recommended pesticides for the standing crop, constant vigil and pest surveillance, awareness creation among the farmers for seed treatment and use of resistant varieties like TPS, Arun, Kufri, Pukhraj, Kufri Pushkar, Kufri Jyoti, etc.

The incidence of late blight of potato has been reviewed by the Central Government with the affected States and advised the State Governments for ensuring availability of disease free seed potato and promoting good agricultural practices in the coming season.